NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

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September/October 2007

Up Front from the President

Dear Colleagues,

Let me take this opportunity to welcome all of you back to the new school year and to offer a special greeting to our beginning teachers. After what I hope was a restful and rejuvenating summer, I want to wish you the very best for a fulfilling and successful year. Rest assured that your Provincial Executive and Staff at the NLTA will do their utmost to support and provide you with the professional services you've come to know and rely upon.

The strength of the NLTA lies within you; the membership, and we must rely on each other, perhaps even more so during these challenging times in today's classroom. We must be involved in our Association at the school, branch, committee and executive levels in order to remain a strong and vibrant organization of and for teachers. I invite all of you to become more involved in the Association, younger and more seasoned teachers alike, to take ownership of your NLTA and to help direct its future. As we continue to adapt to the changing needs of the profession, let us have greater input into our Association structures to ensure the changes protect and support the membership to the greatest degree possible.

While attending the Canadian Teachers' Federation AGM in Toronto this past July, it was clear that teachers across the country are experiencing very similar challenges at the bargaining table and in the classrooms of the nation as we are. Teachers spoke passionately about class size issues, increasing workloads and the need to improve upon their working conditions. As your representative, delivering our provincial report, I spoke about our quest and the absolute necessity to reduce teacher workload and hopefully enhance the quality of life for teachers both personally and professionally. It is still our task to do so and one to which your Negotiating Team, chaired under the capable guidance of Vice-President Lily Cole, and your Provincial Executive are fully committed.

By the time you read this "Upfront" message, it is likely that the Provincial Election will be behind us. We did prepare a list of questions for the leaders of all political parties and published their responses as soon as they were available. Hopefully, this allowed you to know where the parties stood in relation to issues that are critical for us, namely those that would be addressed with the implementation of the recommendations in the two Commission Reports on ISSP/Pathways and Teacher Allocation Review.

The issues which have been repeatedly identified by the membership include a new and improved teacher allocation formula, class size reductions, guaranteed preparation time, the reduction or eradication of supervision and the removal and streamlining of the paperwork and meeting requirements in special services. A survey commissioned by your Association this past spring clearly indicates that our citizens, both parents of school-age children and the public at large, support immediate action from the provincial government to increase education funding in this province. The same public opinion survey has respondents indicating, by a clear majority, that the level of teacher workload in this province is far too high. It is clear then, that the public, not just the NLTA, believe government should take action to reduce teacher stress, improve our working conditions and increase the overall level of funding in our public school system. These issues should be addressed in the Commission Reports and thus allow us to conclude outstanding issues in collective bargaining.

We will be addressing salary and allowance increases with the expiry of our compensation package in August of 2008. Provincial Executive and your Negotiating Team will determine the strategies surrounding this approach in the months ahead. The Premier has recently stated that the public sector will be compensated for their financial sacrifices over the last four years. We certainly will be taking that message to the bargaining table.

As we move through the school year and strive to negotiate improvements in the critical areas, it is my sincere hope and desire that we support each other as colleagues more than ever and that we place our own definable limits around our work life to help ensure our well-being. While we all want to do the best that we can for the students in our care, we can be of little use to them or our families if we stretch ourselves beyond what is reasonable or healthy. Strike that balance between work, home and personal endeavors so that your year is healthy, happy and satisfying. Please take the time to enjoy your families, friends and teaching, but also take some time – just for you.

Have a great year.

Sean Noah

THE bulletin

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Reminder To All Schools

Do you have an Occupational Health and Safety Committee or Occupational Health and Safety Worker Representative at your school? **It's the Law!!**

Section 37 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act states: *Where 10 or more workers are employed at a workplace, the employer shall establish an occupational health and safety committee to monitor the health, safety and welfare of the workers employed at the workplace.*

Section 41(1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act states: *Where less than 10 workers are employed at a workplace, the employer shall ensure that a worker not connected with the management of the workplace is designated as the worker health and safety representative to monitor the health, safety and welfare of workers employed at the workplace.*

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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

WITLESS BAY

Visiting Artists Program brings harmony to schools

In June, eighty students from St. John Bosco (St. John's) and St. Bernard's (Witless Bay) elementary choirs gathered at St. Bernard's Elementary as part of the Visiting Artists Program. Local musician, Dr. Valerie Long, worked with the choirs to further develop their choral singing technique. The choirs then presented an afternoon of choral singing for the local community. The program featured the elementary choirs of St. John Bosco and St. Bernard's, the St. Bernard's primary choir, a "surprise" rendition of *Jack Was Every Inch a Sailor* by teachers from both schools and four selections sung by the combined elementary choirs. The performance ended with a finale of over 180 children's voices singing *Safe Home*. Following the afternoon concert the two choirs indulged in a walk to Witless Bay beach and a meal at the school before saying farewell until next year.

Choir students from St. John Bosco and St. Bernard's gather together to perform as part of the Visiting Artists Program.

This is the third collaboration between the choirs of St. John Bosco and St. Bernard's Elementary schools. The students take turns visiting each other's schools as part of their Safe and Caring Schools programs. Music teachers Karen Dalton and Carolyn Campbell have turned this into an annual event for their schools.

St. Bernard's partners with community groups for school improvement

St. Bernard's Elementary School in Witless Bay serves 232 students from seven different communities along the Southern Shore. During the 2005-06 school year, the Eastern School District built an addition onto the school to absorb elementary students from the closed St. Patrick's School in Bay Bulls. "We now have a beautiful building situated on a hill a stone's throw away from the ocean," said George Samms, Physical Education teacher at St. Bernard's. "Up until this year, we were lacking in one area; a playground area. During the expansion stage, a gymnasium and a narrow playing field were built to meet the physical education and healthy living needs of our students; however, our school grounds were not conducive to safe and healthy play." This year the staff at the school decided to change this scenario and formed a School Grounds Improvement Committee comprised of staff and parents. The committee embarked on a five-phase plan.

The committee decided that the plan would have a better chance of coming to fruition if they sought community and corporate support. As of the first week of June, they had completed three out of five phases. The first phase involved widening the school's playing field to make it a more functional space for curriculum-related activities and free play, and the installation of a 300 foot wheelchair accessible walkway diagonally down the hill. The second phase was to create an environmental classroom on the grounds where the teachers could deliver instruction in a setting that is both healthy and beautiful. The third phase involved a general clean up and beautification of the grounds.

Several businesses stepped forward to assist in St. Bernard's mission. Saturn is considering the school as a suitable site for the installation of playground equipment. As of yet, the decision has not been made. Ernie and Gerard Dunne of Harbour Construction did much of the work on the field and

environmental classroom and did the excavation work for the school's green project.

On June 6, Newfoundland Power was invited to St. Bernard's to put off their annual Envirofest Program. "Gerard Curtis, John Healey and Brian Malone of Newfoundland Power did a magnificent job of organizing and running the event," reported Mr. Samms. The Envirofest involved setting up the gymnasium with booths and inviting businesses to participate in an evening of environmental education. Twenty-two Newfoundland companies showcased their eco-friendly products and services. As a part of the event, Newfoundland Power gave away numerous prizes to the students and community members including two mountain bikes.

Aerial view of St. Bernard's environmental classroom.

An invitation was sent out to all the students and parents in the area to participate in the event. Approximately 150 students showed and brought another 150 of their parents and siblings. All 21 teachers on staff also took part. Everyone showed up with rakes, shovels and other gardening tools. The public viewed the products and services presented by the eco-friendly companies involved, then proceeded in "greening" the grounds. Newfoundland Power provided over $3,000 worth of plants, flowers, shrubs and trees to be planted. Patricia Puddester of Pat's Plants & Gardens in Bay Bulls lent her horticultural expertise in creating a grounds plan and provided all the plants and related materials for the project. The students and their families participated in a recycling blitz that day and did general grounds clean up that evening. Mr. Samms said that the students and their families demonstrated the power of community involvement by planting all the vegetation before dark that evening. "The front of our school now has huge flower beds full of beautiful plants and trees. Our Environmental classroom is now ready to be used by our students and staff in the fall. It is built in the circular concept with large stones, trees, plants and finished with a mulch base overlooking the bay".

"We would like to thank all the students, parents and businesses involved in helping achieve something extraordinary at our school," said Mr. Samms. "We would like to send out a special thank you to Gerard Curtis, John Healey and Brian Malone who demonstrated a perfect example of what can be accomplished through partnerships between schools and business. Newfoundland Power has certainly shown that they are excellent corporate citizens who care about our environment."

UPPER ISLAND COVE

Schools hosts annual Grandparent's Day

This past May, St. Peter's School in Upper Island Cove held it's annual Grandparent's Day as part of their Social Studies curriculum. Mr. Reid and his Grade 5 class welcomed over 50 grandparents. During the afternoon grandparents were entertained by fiddle music, poems, singing and dancing. Grandparents recalled stories of what school was like for them as well as how they heated their homes, how they used local remedies, etc. The class also set up a museum of local artifacts such as a potbelly stove, washing boards, school readers, a Browie camera, etc. They were treated to a "mug up" of lassie bread, raisin tea buns, fish and brewis, toutons and molasses, and other favorites.

Students at St. Peter's School entertain grandparents with some fiddle music.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

2007 Ella Manuel Award winners announced

In June, the 2007 Ella Manuel Awards were presented to Grade 12 students Cheryl White of Fatima Academy in St. Bride's and Katie Phillips of Crescent Collegiate in South Dildo. *(cont'd on page 6)*

Cheryl White

Katie Phillips

The two winners were selected from many excellent applications received from high schools around the province.

This is the twenty-second year in which the award has been given in memory of Newfoundland writer, broadcaster, peace activist and feminist Ella Manuel. The awards are made to young women graduating from high schools around the province to assist in their further education.

Both young women are outstanding students, active in school and community affairs. Cheryl White is heading for a career in engineering and Katie Phillips for women's studies and law.

NLTA Senior Mathematics League enters 20th year

The NLTA Senior Mathematics League (a partnership of the NLTA Math/Science Special Interest Council, Memorial University, and the Department of Education) has now started its 20th year! The League was begun in the fall of 1987 and has grown from a competition in the St. John's area to a province-wide competition with many schools competing in local leagues in regions all across Newfoundland and Labrador. Most students participate in person at local sites; some also use the web-version of the games. Our distance education students participate online through 'live' distance education software. The best problem solving teams from all participating regions are brought together for the annual Provincial Championship game.

Regular League games take place simultaneously, four times a year, on Saturday mornings with schools competing against each other in most regions of Newfoundland and Labrador. Game dates are tentatively set each September with Game #1 in mid-late October; Game #2 in mid-late November; Game #3 in mid-late February; and Game #4 in mid-late March. Game dates in your district may vary slightly so please consult your district Mathematics Program Specialist or Math League Contact.

Games consist of teachers, parents, mathematics professors, and other invited guests observe students trying to solve 10 challenging problems and a 4-problem relay question. Students are invited to present solutions and at the provincial final may even compete for prizes offered by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics by demonstrating how they arrived at their answers (often surprising even the Memorial University problem setters with their cleverness, competence and ingenuity)!

The web-based version of the League, which became available in the spring of 2001, allows any team/student(s) who cannot get to a site-based game the opportunity to participate. Web-games are available to any school grouping in Canada.

The Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI) also participates in the league with students participating in a live synchronous (real-time) game via a secure web server. Since 2005, provincial final participants from CDLI have represented the communities of Arnold's Cove, St. Brendan's, King's Cove, Eastport, Trepassey, and Meadows. In 2005, and again in 2007, a CDLI team had a strong 4th place finish.

The Provincial Championship Game (Game #5 of each season) takes place towards the end of a school year (usually in late April or early May), with the top school(s) from each district participating and is usually held at Memorial University.

Games are currently developed by problem setters Dr. Peter Booth and Dr. Bruce Shawyer, Mathematics professors at Memorial University, and are distributed across the province by provincial coordinator Paul Gosse, Gonzaga High School, St. John's, to district Program Specialists who act as local coordinators.

The commitment the teacher volunteers and students is matched only by the love of teaching and learning Mathematics that Dr. Shawyer and Dr. Booth have generously brought as they continue to reach out to help develop mathematical talent in students in our schools at many levels over 20 years. As you might expect, many of these students are highly sought after by universities for their ability to apply and transfer knowledge in problem solving situations. The Canadian Mathematical Society has published two books of games used in the Senior Mathematics League and there have been leagues in Nova Scotia and Ontario using some of the games.

This league captures a tremendous spirit of cooperation among mathematics educators at the high school and university level, while affording students the opportunity to grow as problem solvers, developing skills that are much in demand today as technology changes rapidly. It is an excellent example of what a love of teaching and a spirit of cooperation among educators can produce.

Schools, or individual students, interested in playing a Math League game on the web, or for more information about the NLTA Senior Mathematics League (and outreach programs of the Dept. of M&S), please visit www.math.mun.ca/ and click "Outreach" or email paulgosse@esdnl.ca.

The Patti Lynn Noonan Memorial University Harlow Travel Bursary

Patti Lynn completed her teacher education program in 2001 and subsequently taught in Attawapiskat, Ontario from 2001 to 2003 and began teaching in Strathmore, Alberta in August of 2003. Patti Lynn was diagnosed with a brain tumor in March of 2004, underwent surgery at that time, convalesced for a year, and returned to her position in Strathmore from August to December of 2005. Unfortunately, in January of 2006 her MRI showed growth in the tumor and following a valiant fight through chemotherapy for all of 2006, Patti Lynn succumbed to her brain cancer and died on January 29, 2007.

To celebrate Patti Lynn's life and to provide the opportunity to recognize her qualities of courage, determination, perseverance and general love for life and learning, the Patti Lynn Noonan Memorial University Harlow Travel Bursary was established in the spring of 2007.

Patti Lynn completed her teacher training internship at Harlow Campus outside London, England in 2001 and utilized every opportunity to travel throughout France, Britain, Ireland and other parts of Europe. She regarded these excursions as a tremendously enriching component of her Teacher Education Program.

This Bursary established in her name will assist qualified students in sharing the experiences that Patti Lynn loved during her time in Harlow.

The recipient of this Bursary has to demonstrate financial need, has to be in the Primary/Elementary Education Program at Memorial University and has to be attending the winter semester at Harlow Campus. The funds must be used for travel.

Applications for this Bursary can be obtained through the Faculty of Education or on line at www.mun.ca.

Tobacco free schoolyards

In June 2007, ACT (Alliance for the Control of Tobacco) conducted a survey of administrators to inquire as to how the new smoking policies were progressing. Principals reported that in general, the policies were working well; however, there were some issues and problems that needed to be examined. These included students moving off the school grounds to smoke, parents and visitors smoking on the grounds

and groups using the school facility after hours who were not abiding by the new smoke free policies.

In response to these concerns, a plan of action has been developed which includes providing each school with metal signs for outdoor use which clearly indicate to students, parents and visitors that the property is smoke free. These 2x3 foot signs have been developed by ACT and have been sent to all schools. As well, new cessation materials for students including the youth cessation brochure, *FREE YOURSELF*, has been developed and sent to schools with students in junior and senior high grades. Information from the Smokers' Helpline was also included with the cessation brochure. Finally, a handout entitled *Reinforcing the Tobacco Free Schoolyard Policy* which provides tips on how to make parents and visitors more aware of the new policies has been forwarded to administrators of all schools.

Teachers are encouraged to visit www.actnl.com for more ideas and resources to use with their students.

Retired professor calls for research assistance

Retired Geography Professor Ian Brookes, Ph.D. has initiated a research project called *The Intellectual Life of Newfoundland Working People, 1850-1949*. The project grew out of his reading of *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* by Jonathan Rose (Yale University Press, 2000). Rose deals with the various settings of working people and the various ways and means through which they enriched and improved their lives through reading, either self-selected material, or through institutions.

Professor Brookes wants to research the same for Newfoundland for the century leading up to Confederation. He hopes that people will contact him to contribute accounts of themselves, extended family members, or acquaintances being involved in self-education through personal and/or institutional means, other than regular schooling. For example, someone might remember an uncle long ago telling of his reading novels by Dickens when he was off-duty on the Newfoundland Railway, a coastal vessel, or at the paper mill.

"I have spent 40-some years doing research," says Professor Brookes, "on the landforms of the western part of the island, and have come to think of 'The Rock' as a second-home, where strong attachment to people and place have led me to this departure from my usual investigations."

Professor Brookes can be contacted by e-mail at ibrookes@yorku.ca.

Fit for School leads to healthier school children

Would your class or school like an opportunity to win one of four $750 prizes and improve the health of students? Then enter the 2007-08 Fit for School competition. It invites students, classes and/or schools all over the province to generate ideas for innovative projects in the areas of fitness, wellness, health and/or physical education.

Two schools have already won. Last year it was Grade 6 students at Clarenville Middle School for a series that changed unhealthy attitudes and habits by incorporating drama, physical exercise and art. The year before it was Grade 5 students at Templeton Academy in Meadows. They received funds from the Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (CFNL) for a program to improve their physical health that included dance, nutrition and art lessons.

Fit for School was established by the CFNL to encourage elementary students to come up with their own solutions to the obesity rates in the province's schools, which are the highest in Canada.

More information and application forms are available at the web sites of the Fit for School sponsors: www.cfnl.ca (Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador); www.nlta.nl.ca (Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association); www.cbc.ca/nl/ (CBC).

Students enjoy a healthy snack as part of the Fit for School Program.

NEW BRUNSWICK

CONTACT 2007: Teachers Work

Twenty-five teachers from branches throughout Newfoundland and Labrador joined with colleagues from across Atlantic Canada to attend CONTACT 2007 at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick from August 7-10. The theme of this

year's conference was *Teachers Work* – and they did – as well as play! It was a great way to transition from summer to school. CONTACT was NLTA's new President, Sean Noah's, first official event, and the NLTA delegation were proud to have him with them!

CONTACT 2008 will be hosted by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union at St. Francis Xavier University. Watch for posters and ads through your branch and school representative in early spring.

Delegates at CONTACT 2007.

WINNIPEG

NL teachers attend Historica Teachers' Institute

Seven teachers from the province attended the Historica Teachers' Institute in Winnipeg from July 3-8. Over the course of the six days they studied Dr. Peter Seixas' benchmarks of historical thinking – an idea that breaks the study of history into six components.

NL attendees at the Historica Teachers' Institute in Winnipeg.

Three benchmarks were studied in detail: a field trip, a mini-assignment and a presentation to the entire delegation. These presentations included lesson plans which used the benchmarks with authentic material gathered from the Royal Canadian Mint, the Manitoba Museum and the St. Boniface Museum. A session on how to evaluate students' understanding of the benchmarks was also included. This will be especially beneficial in guiding the Historica Fair in the upcoming school year.

The teachers from this province who attended were: Lynn Alexander, Lisa Freake, Wade Green, Jeff Milley, Mike Schulz, Diane Troke-King and Dawn Turley.

CANADA

Project Love celebrates 20th anniversary

Project Love is celebrating 20 years of helping Canadians make a difference. Since its inception in 1987, CODE, the Canadian international literacy agency that manages Project Love, has shipped more than a million and a half Project Love kits of school supplies to students in Africa and the Caribbean.

Over the years, Project Love has been adopted by hundreds of thousands of Canadian teachers who recognize the project and its accompanying curriculum-based educational resources as a unique opportunity for their students to learn about international issues and assist their peers in the developing world.

CODE partners with local education-based organizations in the countries where it works. When CODE's partners receive the shipments of Project Love kits, they ensure the kits distribution to schools. Partners also distribute books, some donated from North American publishers and others published locally, to build library collections in remote communities and schools. Professional support is given to teachers who are often accustomed to teaching with few resources. Project Love kits and the books assist students and further enrich their learning environment.

While Project Love contributes to education in Africa by assisting with the everyday needs of classrooms, it also supports education at home in Canada. The program is a springboard to a wide range of lessons and activities, and a strong tool for introducing global education issues to young Canadians.

This year Project Love kits – each containing a pencil, an eraser, a ruler and a notebook – will be sent to primary school students in Tanzania, where only 69% of youth can read or write, and Senegal, where only 39% of the population is literate. Resources for education in both these countries are limited and such school supplies are beyond the means of most families.

For more information on CODE or to get involved in Project Love, please visit www.codecan.org or contact Jana McDade at jmcdade@codecan.org, 613-232-3569 ext.252.

Celebrate National Media Education Week

Media Awareness Network (MNet) and the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) are partnering for the second consecutive year to present National Media Education Week, November 5-9, 2007. The purpose of the week is to promote media literacy as a key component in the education of young people, and to encourage the integration of media education into Canadian schools, homes and communities.

Many children today spend more time interacting with media than they do attending school. While young people are immersed in media environments – watching, reading, listening, interacting, and creating – they are learning about the world and forming perceptions of themselves and others. This "informal" learning is happening largely without adult guidance or critical reflection. In order to be literate today, young people need to develop a whole range of critical thinking, communication and information management skills to apply to their use of media – and media education is an essential tool in helping them acquire these skills.

Media Awareness Network and the Canadian Teachers' Federation are working in collaboration with education organizations, libraries, and community-, parent- and youth-based groups to host media education activities to celebrate the week. The activities will include parent information sessions, student contests, media fairs, panel discussions, professional development workshops and conference presentations.

Mark your calendar and plan a media education activity for your classroom, community, or home.

For more information on how you can take part in National Media Week 2007, visit the web site at: www.mediaeducationweek.ca or contact Media Awareness Network at info@media-awareness.ca.

Teachers Without Borders

Teachers Without Borders – Canada, a newly incorprated non-governmental organization (NGO), are members of the Canadian educational community and supporters who are interested in joining a worldwide group of volunteers devoted to closing the global education divide.

Get involved:

- be a part of travelling workshops equipping teachers in other countries with resources and best practices (if you are interested and able to travel as part of a workshop team, please provide your areas of interest and expertise);
- help to develop global curriculum;
- donate educational resources;
- collaborate with and/or mentor teachers across the globe;
- connect your class with a class in another country for collaborative learning projects.

The true way that we can develop global citizens is if we actually taught, learned and acted within a global context.

For more information and to be a part of a growing movement of empowerment through education, visit www.twb-canada.org or contact Beverley Park, Senior Administrative Officer, NLTA, Tel: 709-726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 244; bpark@nlta.nl.ca.

ELI CONRAD OLDFORD, 1927 - 2006

Eli Conrad Oldford was born at Burnside, October 18, 1927, where he received his early education in a one-room school.

He started his teaching career at Hatchet Cove, Trinity Bay in September 1945. The following year he taught at nearby Gooseberry Cove. In September 1948 he started teaching at Grand Bay East and in 1951-52 he spent at nearby Channel. However, it was back to Grand Bay East until 1961. It was here that he met and married Audrey (nee Kettle). He returned to University and finished his BA (Ed) degree and in 1964 following two months at St. Chad's, started to teach at Holy Cross in Eastport until his retirement in 1984.

Eli attended summer school to finish his BA degree as well as spent a few summers as a Welfare Officer in Trinity and Notre Dame Bay. He also taught for a short time at the Fisheries College in St. John's.

During his 20 years at Holy Cross, Eli was able to impart his knowledge, particularly in Mathematics, to a great number of students. He will always be remembered by them, I am sure.

Eli was also active in his Church, particularly at St. Alban's, Burnside. He also spent 15 years as a member of the Eastport Lions Club and after his retirement became an active Board member in the Eastport Credit Union.

His hobbies included boatbuilding, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, boating, carpentry work and cutting wood.

In 1986, two years after his retirement, Eli was diagnosed with a rare form of Hairy-Cell Leukemia. Although somewhat treatable, it forced him from his intended retirement plans into regular stays in the hospital for radiation, chemotherapy and other types of treatment. These treatments, some experimental, resulted in nerve damage in his lower extremities forcing this active outdoorsmen into a walker and shortly after, a wheelchair. He often commented on how he should not have waited until retirement to do what he wanted. A lesson he hoped others in his profession would learn from. He died with a sound mind experiencing terrible pain on October 14, 2006, four days before his 79th birthday, at Lakeside Homes in Gander.

Eli is survived by wife Audrey, two daughters Linda and Patricia, son Paul and their spouses; grandchildren, whom he cherished: Josh, Julie, Gavin, Mark, Nicole, and Chloe; as well as two brothers and a large circle of family and friends.

(Submitted by Paul Oldford)

THERESA HAYWARD, 1929 - 2006

The salt of the earth. These few words speak volumes to a gentle soul who has passed from our midst, but one whose memory will be cherished by those fortunate enough to have known her.

Theresa, born in St Vincent's of humble fisherfolk, became a teacher at a very young age. She spent 23 years in the teaching profession, teaching in Ship Harbour, Cape St. George, St. Stephen's, and finally in St. Vincent's. She married Herbert Hayward of St. Stephen's in1950. They had three children – George, Marie and Irene. Their family soon grew larger with the addition of many foster children. Theresa became very fond of those children, so much so that she adopted one boy, Ronnie, who was with her to the end. Her husband Herb and son George pre-deceased her some time ago.

Theresa made no waves. In her own quiet way she did her job and did it well. She was an exemplary teacher whose mere presence made a difference. She was a model for many young teachers lucky enough to have taught with her. Her classroom was her sanctuary. Her students were her children. She had great respect for her students. This kindness was well noted by parents. She had a wonderful rapport with her co-workers and was admired by all.

Theresa took every day in stride and did her duty in her own quiet way. She made quite a contribution to the world around her by dedicating her many years of service to the generations of children who were lucky enough to have come under her influence.

"Rest in peace, oh good and faithful servant. You have earned it."

(Submitted by Marie Myrick)

Eli Conrad Oldford

Theresa Hayward

Review of Recent Improvements to Workers' Compensation Benefits

by PERRY DOWNEY

During the past year, there have been significant improvements made in the overall benefits payable to teachers who are injured at work and who avail of Workers' Compensation.

1. Effective January 1, 2007, the Workers' Compensation Benefit rate increased from $47,425 per annum to $48,425 (or $1,862.50 bi-weekly). (See table below for details and comparisons of salary vs. WHSCC Benefits.) Additional information was also printed in the June 2007 *Benefits and Economic Services Bulletin*, Vol. 7, No 1.

2. Effective February 26, 2007, the Provincial Executive amended the NLTA Policy for teachers who are injured on the job. A teacher who is injured on the job and required to be off work on a Workers' Compensation claim for a period of time in excess

Teacher Salary (Top of Scale) vs. WHSCC Benefits (Maximum) – Effective January 1, 2007

	Teacher Salary V	WHSCC Benefit	Teacher Salary VI	WHSCC Benefit	Teacher Salary VII	WHSCC Benefit
Annual Salary/WHSCC Benefit	$53,545.00	$48,425.00	$62,018.00	$48,425.00	$70,161.00	$48,425.00
Biweekly Income	$2,059.42	$1,862.50	$2,385.29	$1,862.50	$2,698.50	$1,862.50
Biweekly Income Benefit (Including Taxable Benefit)	$2,064.99	$1,868.07	$2,391.65	$1,868.07	$2,705.06	$1,868.07
Total Federal/Provincial Deductions (Income Tax, CPP and EI)	$564.26	$547.29	$697.76	$547.24	$830.15	$547.29
Net Income	$1,500.73	$1,320.78	$1,693.89	$1,320.78	$1,874.91	$1,320.78
WHSCC Entitlement - 80% of Net Income		$1,056.62		$1,056.62		$1,056.62
Other Deductions:						
Employment Insurance		$33.52		$33.52		$33.52
Pension Contributions (9.35%)	$192.56	$192.56	$223.03	$223.03	$252.31	$252.31
NLTA Fees (1.25%)	$25.74	$25.74	$29.82	$29.82	$33.73	$33.73
Group Insurances (Basic Coverage - Family - A1, A3 & B)	$52.80	$52.80	$53.63	$53.63	$54.97	$54.97
Total Deductions	$271.10	$304.62	306.48	$340.00	$341.01	$374.53
Teacher's "Take Home Pay"	$1,229.63	$752.00	$1,387.41	$716.62	$1,533.90	$682.09
Percentage of "Take Home Pay"		61.2%		51.7%		44.5%

of two weeks will no longer have to pay regular NLTA fees on their regular salary, in order to maintain their membership in the Association. Teachers who are injured on the job and placed on a Workers' Compensation Claim for periods in excess of two weeks will be considered to be on Injury on Duty leave and will only have to pay $2.00 per month to the NLTA to maintain their membership.

3. Effective September 1, 2006, the NLTA Group Insurance Trustees added a supplement to the LTD policy entitled LTD – Workers' Compensation Top-Up Program. For those NLTA members insured under the LTD policy who experience injury on the job necessitating lost time from work and are in receipt of Workers' Compensation benefits, this program will top up the Workers' Compensation. This will bring the teacher to 85% of net salary as defined by Workers' Compensation (Gross biweekly salary minus income tax minus EI premium minus CPP premium). The benefit will be paid for a lifetime maximum of 195 teaching days. The program will help relieve some of the economic hardship experienced when a teacher is injured on the job and receives a significantly lower income from Workers' Compensation benefits compared to the regular net income from pay. It is important to note that this benefit is only available to teachers covered under the NLTA Long Term Disability Plan and is another good reason to maintaining long-term disability insurance.

As a result of the changes listed above, teachers who are injured on duty and in receipt of Workers' Compensation benefits will see significant improvements to their overall "take-home" pay, especially those who have Long Term Disability (LTD) coverage under the NLTA Group Insurance Plan. The NLTA will continue to pursue additional improvements to the Workers' Compensation system in an attempt to improve the financial burden placed on teachers when they are injured at work.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Frequently Asked Questions from Benefits & Economic Services

Q. What should I do if I have reason to believe that a student is being abused?

A. Teachers work in an environment that places them in a position to make assessments and observations which are not afforded to other professionals. In this province, the Child, Youth and Family Services Act ("the Act") mandates that any person who has information causing them to believe that a child is or may be in need of protective intervention must immediately report the matter to an individual designated under the Act. The duty to report applies even in situations where the information would usually be considered confidential or privileged, such as disclosures made by a student to a guidance counselor. Failure to report is punishable by fine or imprisonment or both. The responsibility for reporting the suspicion of child maltreatment rests with any person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a child and who has reasonable grounds to suspect the abuse. The responsibility is an individual one and is only discharged by reporting directly to a Child Protection social worker, a peace officer (RCMP or RNC), or a designated director of a regional health or hospital board.

Once a report is made, a social worker may wish to interview the teacher and the child. In order to complete an objective assessment, the social worker will likely interview the child in the school, and the Act gives the social worker the authority to do so. Therefore, it is advisable for a teacher to let his/her school principal know that a report has been made so that the school is prepared to cooperate with the social worker when the time comes. However, it is important to note that it is the responsibility of the social worker, not the school, to notify the parents of the interview.

There are NLTA publications available to assist teachers in understanding their obligation to report child maltreatment, and to help them become more aware of what constitutes child abuse and the potential indicators of child maltreatment. These publications can be accessed online at www.nlta.nl.ca. Click on "Publications" to access Infosheet #18 and the Child Maltreatment brochure.

Q. What happens if my personal property is lost or damaged at school?

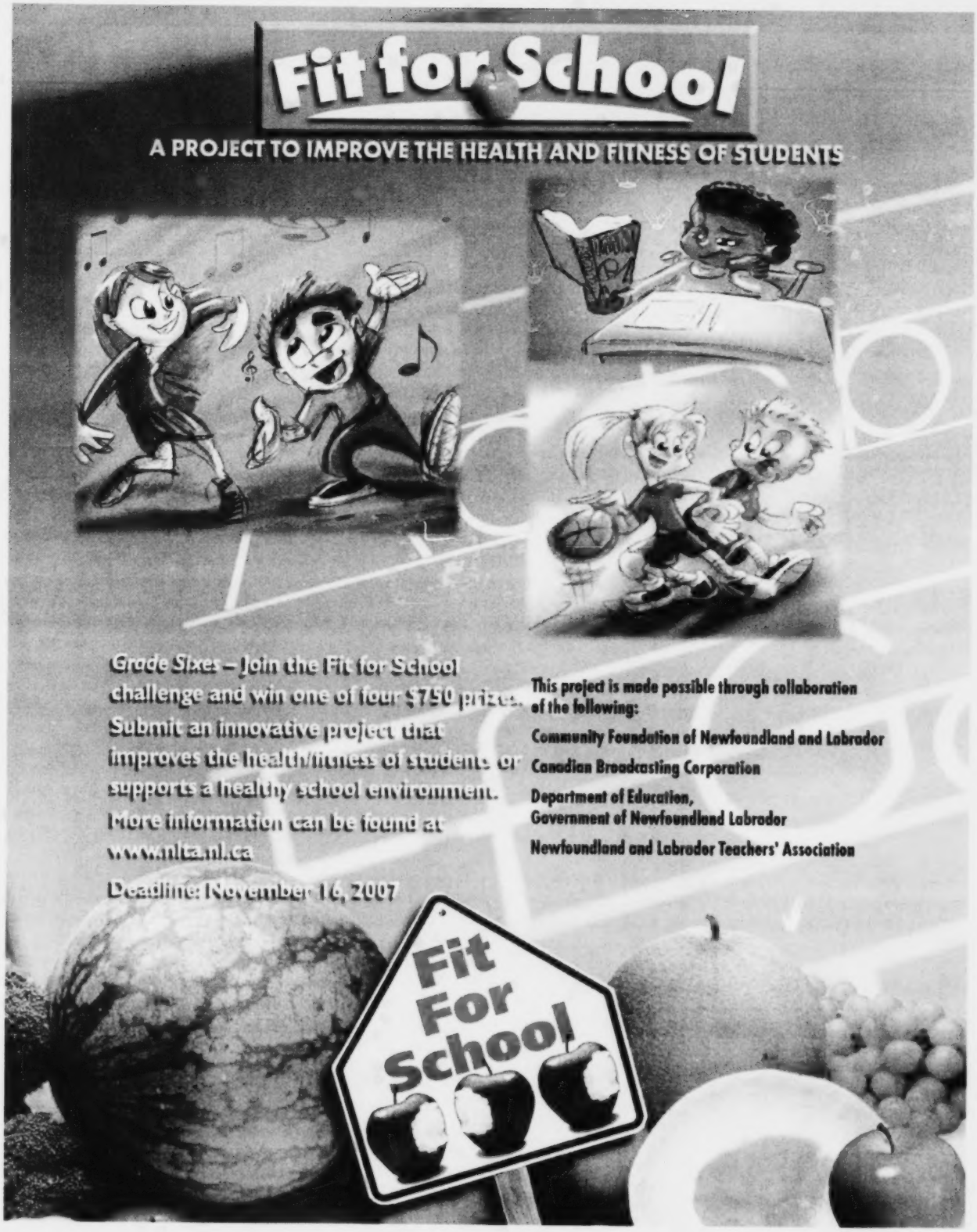
A. This issue is dealt with in Article 34 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 35 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement). Two types of personal property are identified – "personal effects which the teacher would reasonably have in his/her possession during the normal performance of his/her duty" and "tools, equipment, or other materials" which the teacher has received written permission from the School Board to use in the performance of teaching duties.

The first category includes items such as clothing, footwear and eyeglasses. If, in the performance of his/her duty, a teacher suffers loss of or damage to any such personal effects, he/she may be entitled to monetary compensation, up to a maximum amount of $325. The amount of compensation will depend upon proof of the value of the item(s) damaged or lost.

The second category covers items used by teachers in performing their duties. A teacher's own personal resources, equipment, computer, camera, etc. are not personal effects. In order to be protected from loss of or damage to such items, teachers need to have written authorization from their employer to use them in the course of their teaching duties before bringing the items into the school. Some personal home insurance policies may provide coverage for such items at school; however, this would depend on the particulars of each individual situation and teachers are advised to consult with their insurer and request written confirmation of coverage before taking personal belongings into the workplace.

Any incident of loss or damage to personal effects or other items must be reported in writing to the Director of the School Board within five working days of the discovery of the loss or damage. If this deadline is not met, a claim that would otherwise qualify for compensation could be denied. In addition, the School Board is not obliged to compensate a teacher for any loss of or damage to personal property that is caused by the teacher's own negligence.

This information has been prepared by Stefanie Tuff, Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division. For information on these topics or other areas of Benefits and Economic Services, please contact any of the following: Lloyd Hobbs, ext. 230, Don Ash, ext. 231, Perry Downey, ext. 226 or Stefanie Tuff, ext. 232.


Fit for School
A PROJECT TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND FITNESS OF STUDENTS
Grade Sixes – Join the Fit for School challenge and win one of four $750 prizes. Submit an innovative project that improves the health/fitness of students or supports a healthy school environment. More information can be found at www.nlta.nl.ca
Deadline: November 16, 2007
This project is made possible through collaboration of the following:
Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland Labrador
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
Fit For School

Pre-Retirement Seminars 2007

Teachers within two years of retirement eligibility should register for one of the NLTA's seven Pre-Retirement Seminars scheduled to be held in the fall of 2007 in Stephenville, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. (Please note: consideration will be given to combining seminars if registration numbers are sufficiently low in a particular seminar.) These seminars are held in accordance with Association policy as part of its overall program of pre-retirement counselling. Clause 18.12 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 29.12 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement provide two days paid leave to attend these seminars.

Information sessions will deal with topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, Severance Pay, Employment Insurance, NLTA Group Insurance, Financial and Estate Planning and the Canada Pension Plan. As well, time is available for individual counselling of prospective retirees by the various consultants.

Things You Should Know About Attending

- Potential participants must register with the NLTA for a particular seminar and apply to their Board office for leave.
- Only those teachers eligible to retire during or before June 2010 will be eligible to attend.
- Registration must be received at the NLTA Office at least four weeks in advance to ensure approval of attendance.
- The Association reserves the right to refuse acceptance of registration at any particular seminar if the registration forms have not been received at the NLTA office in accordance with Association policy.
- It is the responsibility of the individual participant to make arrangements and pay for hotel accommodations, should any be required. Please reference that you are attending an NLTA function and the hotel should provide a reduced rate which is available to the NLTA.
- Travel expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the following provisions:
  i) participants shall be reimbursed the lesser of travel by private vehicle or public transportation to the seminar closest to the place of residence. In the event that a teacher requests and is accepted to attend a seminar other than the closest seminar, the participant shall only be reimbursed the amount applicable for travel to the closest seminar.
  ii) payment for travel in a private vehicle shall be at the rate of 12¢ per kilometre for the return trip from residence to seminar site.
  iii) travel via public transportation will be reimbursed at the rate of 80 percent of ferry, taxi, or economy airfare; in the case of airfare, the lesser of excursion (seat sale) or 80 percent of economy airfare will be paid, where excursion (seat sale) fares can be arranged. Receipts shall be required for all reimbursement.
  iv) no expenses will be paid to participants living or teaching in the community where the seminar is held.
  v) a spouse is welcome to accompany the participating teacher to the pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be covered.
- All other expenses, such as meals, accommodation and child care, are the responsibility of the participating teacher.
- Expenses will be provided for one pre-retirement seminar only and a teacher participant shall be permitted to attend one seminar only. (Notwithstanding this, a teacher may attend a second seminar as a spouse.)
- Teachers must attend the seminar location closest to their place of residence, except in cases where the mode, cost or availability of transportation necessitates otherwise.
- Directors and Assistant Directors, and spouses, are welcome to attend one pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be paid in accordance with this policy.

Given the large number of teachers eligible to retire, we reserve the right to limit the number of people who will be granted access, depending on the physical facilities available at each site. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers plan ahead and register early in the event that registrations have to be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

NOTE: The full text of the NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars and the application form can be found on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca). A link on the main page called "Forms Online" will bring you to the applicable form and policy. The NLTA policy will also be mailed to teachers with confirmation of registration.

2007 Pre-Retirement Seminar

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Home Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Social Insurance Number

School Name

School Telephone

Please check which session you will be attending:

- **Oct. 11-12** – Hotel Gander, Gander
- **Oct. 18-19** – Holiday Inn, Stephenville
- **Oct. 25-26** – Mt. Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor
- **Nov. 7-8** – Greenwood Inn, Corner Brook
- **Nov. 22-23** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- **Nov. 29 - 30** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- **Dec. 6-7** – Holiday Inn, St. John's

Please Note

The Corner Brook seminar originally scheduled for Nov. 8-9 has been changed to Nov. 7-8 due to a Board holiday on Nov. 9.

Will your spouse be attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of spouse (if attending)

Earliest eligibility date for pension

Have you attended a previous pre-retirement seminar?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Note:

- Teachers within two years of retirement (on or before June 2010) are eligible to attend.
- All participants must pre-register.
- You will receive confirmation prior to seminar.
- Travel costs will be paid according to policy and only to the nearest seminar.
- Teachers are advised to bring a calculator.

Please submit registration form to:

Melanie Jaster
Benefits and Economic Services Division,
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 *(toll free)*

NOTE: As space is limited, registrations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

FOR NLTA OFFICE USE ONLY		
Date Received	Confirmation Sent	Information Package Sent

NLTA Group Insurance Health Plan

by DON ASH

The NLTA Health Insurance plan is probably the most valued and most expensive of the Group Insurance plan options available to active and retired teachers. Teachers are and should be anxious about rising Health Insurance premiums. This article reviews a recent history of premiums and where premiums appear to be headed – higher!

Prescription drugs are the driving factor in escalating Health Insurance premiums and constitute over 85% of the total dollar value of claims paid out to teachers. Teachers experienced annual double digit increases in Health Insurance premiums beginning in the late 1990s and continuing until recently. Relative stability of claims in the last three years has granted some reprieve, albeit temporary, from this escalation of premiums. The NLTA Group Insurance plan is not unique in this regard. According to ACS/Buck's 7th Annual Canadian Health Care Trend Survey, the average annual total trend factor for prescription drug costs has steadily dropped from 16.61% in 2003 to 14.26% in 2007 (the annual cost trend factor is the percent increase insurers project for plan costs for the coming year.) Don Clarry, a Benefits Consultant with ACS/Buck's in Toronto (Benefits Canada May 2007) says that the reason for the slower growth has to do with three factors: fewer expensive blockbuster drugs entering the market; a steady prevalence of lower priced generic drugs; cost reduction strategies such as generic substitution. While positive news, drug costs are still increasing at a greater rate of increase than any other cost. The table below illustrates the history of NLTA Health Insurance premiums this decade, as well as the premium history of other insurance options available to teachers.

Health Insurance plans, including the NLTA plan, can expect their Health Care costs to increase in the foreseeable future since an aging population will mean a greater occurrence of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and hypertension. Emerging biotechnology drugs and recently developed vaccines will contribute to pushing drug costs up even further. As premiums charged to teachers are based primarily on the claims paid to teachers, the best way to counter this upward trend in claims is for teachers to take all possible steps to stay healthy. Wellness programs and health promotion plans are possible strategies. Trustees and government can pursue to assist teachers in maintaining good health and thereby contain drug costs. In the meantime, each insured teacher member can do his/her part in cost containment by maintaining a healthy lifestyle and active interest in their own health and wellness.

Don Ash is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Premium Changes in Group Insurance – 2000-08
(Monthly Premium Rate)

	Cost-Shared With Government				Non Cost-Shared With Government						
	A1 Life	A3 AD&D	B Health		B2 Dental		Post 65 Retiree Life	A4 Vol AD&D		A2/A5 Vol Life	LTD
	¢/$1.000	¢/$1.000	$		$		$/$1.000	$/$10.000		$/$10.000	
			Single	Family	Single	Family		Single	Family		
2007-08	16.4	0.85	64.00	180.94	21.04	42.22	1.19	0.09	0.21	0.33 - 3.77	0.8
2006-07	17.3	1.0	62.16	175.72	21.04	42.22	1.25	0.18	0.25	0.37 - 4.42	0.8
2005-06	16.0	1.0	62.16	175.72	21.04	42.22	1.37	0.18	0.25	0.37 - 4.18	1.0
2004-05	19.0	1.0	62.16	175.72	20.14	40.44	1.56	0.18	0.25	0.30 - 4.06	1.0
2003-04	16.9	1.0	48.96	138.24	18.70	37.54	1.73	0.18	0.25	0.28 - 3.12	1.1
2002-03	16.7	1.0	45.00	126.96	17.80	35.74	1.64	0.18	0.25	0.26 - 2.74	1.0
2001-02	14.7	1.0	37.96	107.00	17.80	35.74	1.37	0.18	0.25	0.31 - 3.53	.87
2000-01	14.5	1.2	36.00	101.48	17.20	34.56	1.30	0.20	0.25	0.36 - 4.39	.87
% Change from 2000-08	13% Increase	29% Decrease	78% Increase	78% Increase	22% Increase	22% Increase	8% Decrease	55% Decrease	16% Decrease	8% - 14% Decrease	8% Decrease

Awards for Teaching Excellence

Art Educator Awards Presented at Art Works Conference 2007

Five teachers from Newfoundland and Labrador were presented with the Arts Educator Awards at the Department of Education's second annual Arts Work Conference held in Corner Brook this past May. The Arts Work Conference brings together Newfoundland and Labrador artists and teachers from the K-12 system and includes workshops in diverse areas such as storytelling, puppet making, drumming, creative writing, music and visual art.

The Arts Work Educator Award recognizes teachers who have made significant contributions through the arts, exhibit teaching, excellence in the arts, and empower their students through arts in the classroom. This year's award winners are: Jeanette Lanning, Holy Trinity Elementary, Torbay; Dave Anthony, Leo Burke Academy, Bishops Falls; Darren White, G.C. Rowe Junior High, Corner Brook; Lori Deeley, Stephenville High; and Valerie Tubman, Queen Elizabeth Regional High, Foxtrap. Each winner received a personalized etched crystal award and a financial contribution to support his or her arts program.

Commenting on the program, the Honourable Joan Burke, Minister of Education, said, "Teachers and students reap the benefits of one-on-one connections with our leading artists, writers, musicians, dancers and actors. And by doing so, our young people will become creators of our culture and help define the province in years to come."

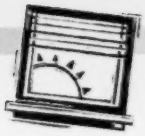
Council for Exceptional Children Outstanding Achievement Award

Mary van Thiel

Mary van Thiel, a teacher at Macdonald Drive Junior High in St. John's, was presented with the Council of Exceptional Children Outstanding Achievement Award this past May in recognition of her work in the area of special education.

Connie Peddle, a teacher at Macdonald Drive Junior High and one of the co-workers who nominated Mary for this award, commented that Mary has displayed an extraordinary level of commitment to the education of students with exceptionalities. "Mary has inspired others in the learning community to help all students experience success in education with her innovative teaching practices and supportive role."

Mary has been teaching at Macdonald Drive Junior High for the past 12 years in the Special Services Department, working with specific criterias such as E, F , G and D.



How to Spend 60% of Your Waking Hours in a Healthy Environment

Create a Healthy Workplace

by CLAUDETTE E. S. COOMBS

A healthy workplace can do wonders for job satisfaction, productivity and general well-being. Since most employees spend about 60% of their waking hours at work, we all share the responsibility, and can reap the benefits, of making a "healthy workplace" our reality! Creating a healthy work environment is a challenge well worth the joint effort and specific actions required to achieve our goal.

Each of us would be fortunate to work in a pleasant environment that runs smoothly, enables us to get the job done without too many obstacles or too much stress and allows us to have a personal life. But such a utopia does not happen by chance.

Creating our desired healthy work environment is dependant upon having the necessary structures and people to support it. This means providing safe and healthy facilities; policies which promote and enable healthy functioning; and qualified, engaged leaders. Even with such conditions in place, there is still the possibility that the workplace might not lend itself to providing or protecting optimal health. One other crucial ingredient is a health-conscious staff. Teachers need to know how to support a healthy workplace and must then engage in behaviours which sustain it.

The STRUCTURES

Creating the structures which facilitate advantageous working conditions is the first step in establishing a healthy workplace and workforce. Without the tools, knowledge and regulations, it is unlikely that good intentions and healthy behaviours will prevail.

The Department of Education and School Boards, supported by school administrative personnel, take a primary role in creating the fundamentals of a supportive environment. The underlying curriculum resources and guidelines must be comprehensive and useable with accessible personnel. The facility, policies and job descriptions must be conducive to physically and psychologically healthy working conditions. Clean air, a respectful workplace culture, reasonable job requirements and adequate resources are examples of conditions which are necessary foundations for a healthy workplace.

To achieve maximum productivity and health benefits, it is important to create an atmosphere which encourages loyalty to the education system and to each other. When teachers believe in the system, trust the leaders and are given the support and resources needed to perform their jobs, they are willing to invest more of themselves in achieving success within the organization. Beware, because the converse is also true. If any of the conditions are missing, teachers are wary of giving more to a system which is not perceived to be reciprocating the generousity.

Maintaining a committed staff depends on teachers being satisfied with the balance between their personal contribution and the combination of benefits and compensation they receive. Giving personal or family time, privacy and a lot of energy must be in exchange for a combination of desirable job benefits, to be considered a reasonable trade! While we are all familiar with the sacrifices, we also acknowledge the benefits of financial compensation, sense of reward, personal gratification, professional fulfilment and career development. Having a "good contract", receiving relevant PD sessions, being recognized during periods of overload, being accommodated for personal issues and actually experiencing joy in the work are all reasons that teachers remain committed to their profession and value the system in which they work.

The NLTA, as a professional association, works toward ensuring teacher benefits, fair working conditions, appropriate compensation, appropriate/pertinent professional development opportunities and takes a practical interest in teacher health. This is also an important step for establishing the foundations for teacher well-being in a healthy workplace. Rushing off to Alberta because the jobs don't currently exist here is an unfortunate reality for many

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. However, it should not be an option that is considered due to an unsatisfactory work environment.

The DIRECTION

School administrators, including principals, vice principals and department heads are the front line people whose skills and approach can encourage, or discourage, a positive work culture. Great leadership and interpersonal skills make a difference in any workplace setting. The ability to set meaningful goals, motivate others to achieve and instill a sense of camaraderie are key leadership qualities.

Enhancing and using personal skills in managing people will help to create an emotionally secure work environment for staff. This sets an example for respectful interactions. Potential conflict can be avoided when issues are recognized and addressed early. Fear, resentment, confusion and heightened stress are minimized by promoting ease of communication through clear direction, expectations and consequences in a climate of fair treatment. Negativity and apathy can be replaced with optimism and engagement when leaders make it a priority to learn and practice the necessary people management skills.

Basic steps for administrators include:

1. Create a team approach to running the school. Within the school, ultimate responsibility rests with the administration. However, teachers can be part of the planning and the process and be kept informed about things that will impact them. This sets an atmosphere of trust and support which promotes better working relationships and more effective operations within the school.
2. Develop a shared vision of education, school goals, mutually agreeable methods and a reasonable action plan to achieve them. When there is disagreement in details, focus on the common goals and overall vision of a healthy school for all. Clearly communicated expectations and consequences along with open communications encourages staff participation, questions, a common understanding and a sense of "being in this together". Opportunities to share, offer input, receive recognition, engage in meaningful decision-making and create change go a long way in ensuring that individuals respond to needs and tasks are performed as planned.
3. Match teachers according to interests, personality and ability for extra curricular requests and in areas of training and competence for committee and job assignments. Link new and seasoned teachers to provide support and rejuvenate interest and enthusiasm. Don't force a match that isn't working. It's not an efficient use of resources and will create disharmony. Whenever possible and appropriate, allow flexibility and accommodate personal needs or preferences. This awareness of the teacher shows a consideration which further develops trust in the leadership.
4. Provide time for social contact. This shows that you value each individual as a person, not just as a teaching machine. Modest actions can result in substantial emotional payoff. Simple suggestions for sharing our human side at work include: holding a pot luck; having a birthday cake in the staff room to celebrate all the birthdays that month; starting a school tradition of an annual hobby display or seasonal dress-up day; making a congratulatory announcement to recognize a "Masters" graduation; or offering an expression of empathy or condolences on a personal loss.

When people get to know each other they are more aware of factors which influence personal behaviour and express greater tolerance and understanding of differences. They are more likely to interpret an occasional affront as unintentional rather than deliberate and thereby prevent much of the potential for negativity among staff.

Staff choices and behaviours reflect a significant contribution to a healthy workplace. Positive attitudes set the tone for productive work interactions and organizational success. We have all experienced situations of interpersonal or functional challenges in which we function more, and at times less, adeptly. Independent of the situation, success often depends on the attitudes and the skills of those involved. The skills we can learn but the attitude we choose!

Make the effort to accept colleagues. That doesn't mean that you have to be best friends. You don't even have to like them! You certainly don't have to like everything they do! But it is beneficial to try to understand their stressors and acknowledge their strengths. Focusing on a colleague's annoying habits or traits could inhibit a valuable sharing or learning process. Each person has arrived at this point with different experiences, so each person also has different skills and knowledge to bring to challenging situations.

Working together in a spirit of cooperation can lead to a healthier work environment. Access resources which improve the place where you spend most of your available time and energy. Your health is the reward!

Claudette Coombs is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Claudette Coombs (ext. 242) or Marie Wall (ext. 265).

The Teachers' Horoscope

Self-fulfilling Prophecies for a Great School Year!

by BEVERLEY PARK

Reading the paper, whether it's the local weekly, *The Western Star* or *The Telegram*, is a ritual for some … that rare moment in the day or week when you get to sit back and perhaps put your feet up as you catch up on the news or get the background on some of the stories you've heard on the radio. I admit that I am not a newspaper reader. I am not seduced by headlines, and I have an inherent, unfounded and inexplicable mistrust of journalists. However, there are three sections of the paper that I "own": the comics, the crossword and the horoscope. It's fairly evident why anyone would like the comics and the crossword. One gives a smile or a chuckle (or something to be used in a workshop); the other is just the right amount of mental stimulus, not so easy that I don't have to think at all; not so difficult as to be frustrating. So, what is it with the horoscope? More often than not horoscopes forecast something good. They lay out a host of possibilities and are so open to interpretation that whether you're in St. John's or Salvage you can make them come true. There's something I find wonderfully appealing in this. It's like an open door inviting me in!

In the dailies, the horoscope supposedly predicts the following day's activity. That, to me, is irrelevant. Since my three indulgences are all on the same page, this gets clipped, even when I am not at home, and saved for those long summer evening barbeques when I'll get through three or four. Just last week I read the horoscopes for October 2006. Oh yes, and I don't even care which sign … I read them all and pick the most interesting one. That's the great thing about horoscopes – they are ridiculously generic and so malleable that they can be molded to fit anyone at any time. Anyone who suggests that they have foretold anything is participating in the act of self-fulfilling prophecy.

As I was justifying this to a less than enthusiastic listener, I began to think of how intriguing it would be to have a set of positive possibilities for every day, week or month and then try and make them happen. For example, if I read in my horoscope the prediction that I was going to meet someone who would have a wonderful impact on my life, I would go through the day (or the month) and every person I encounter would potentially be "that" person. I'd start to look at people differently, as though everyone held a positive promise – everyone from my spouse to the server at the Tim's drive-through or any one of the students or teachers I might meet. The door has been opened to the possibility for each and every one of them to change me, simply in the interaction between us.

"I am offering you a horoscope for the school year that could become your very own set of self-fulfilling positive prophecies."

Indulge me (and yourself) for a moment to consider how you, a teacher, might use this idea to influence the way you see your work this year. I am offering you a horoscope for the school year that could become your very own set of self-fulfilling positive prophecies. If they all come true (that is to say if you MAKE them all true), you could have a magical year. If this works, then next year you can write your own!

September: Others are like a mirror to you. Your smile (or frown) will be reflected back to you from those you meet every day. This month, be what you want to see in those around you.

October: Your attitude toward learning is contagious. Whether you are motivated (or not) will determine whether or not your students and colleagues are motivated. This month you want to be vibrantly alive with learning.

November: You will learn something new every day this month – maybe something small, maybe something big, maybe even something about yourself, but something new each day.

December: This month you will not get caught up in the frenzy of the season. You will take some time for you and stop and smell the poinsettias.

January: You will re-establish the balance this month. If you've been working too hard, you'll play more. If you've been playing too hard, you'll focus on work a little more.

February: This month you will seek to share your talents. Give some support to a colleague, help someone design a lesson, invite someone to your class.

March: You will have an incredible teaching experience this month. If you've ever doubted it, something will happen this month to remind you of why you became a teacher.

April: This is a month to do things differently, to try something new or do an old thing in a new way.

May: You're going to see opportunities for leadership this month. Say "yes" if asked to lead; seek out ways to show your leadership even without being asked. It won't go unnoticed!

June: Give yourself a pat on the back for all the times you've gone the extra mile to make this year a good one for yourself, your students and colleagues. Don't be annoyed when people remind you of those two months off, just smile and say "I deserve it!"

Beverley Park is Senior Administrative Officer, Professional Development Division, with the NLTA.

Volunteer Overseas with CTF!

Would you like to assist teachers in a developing country? Are you interested in learning more about global education issues? Can you see yourself volunteering in Africa, Asia, or the Caribbean?

If yes, Project Overseas (PO) might be for you!

Each year about 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer on CTF's Project Overseas. On PO, Canadian teachers give their time and talent to offer professional development in-service programs in partnership with teacher organizations in developing countries. Based on requests from CTF's partners overseas, teams of Canadian teachers are formed in January and in-service projects take place in July and August.

CTF needs English and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels who are interested in volunteering to offer in-services in a wide range of subjects in countries throughout Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

Application criteria include:

- membership in a provincial or territorial teacher organization which sponsors PO and is a member of CTF;
- an appropriate teacher's certificate;
- at least five years teaching experience in Canada;
- Canadian citizenship;
- excellent health;
- proof of a valid Canadian passport (or application for same).

PO is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel and living expenses are borne by CTF, provincial and territorial teachers' organizations (which are CTF members), CIDA, and the Wild Rose Foundation. No salaries or honoraria are paid to participants in PO and the sponsors do not cover costs associated with substitute teachers or release time.

TO APPLY:

Further information and application forms are available from:
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free in province)
Fax: 726-4302 or 1-877-711-6582 (toll free in province)

Deadline date for applications: **November 7, 2007**

CTF'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS – TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Fall and New Beginnings

by ERIC NIPPARD

Welcome back! I realize that the title of this piece is a touch odd as we normally associate the spring season as a time of new beginnings. (Think back to the article called *The Leaves of Change*. Hey! I have a seasonal theme going. Sorry.) My wife says that I am a bit odd so the title makes perfect sense to me. Fall for the educators of the province signals the beginning of a new school year and the relationships that come with the classroom. (I knew that you would get the connection!) We meet new groups of students, connect with others that we have taught, re-establish the working relationships and friendships with our staff, join together to welcome those new to the community, and look with anticipation to the year ahead.

As with the spring, the beginning of a new school year is a time of regeneration and revision. Often, the subject matter that we teach changes with our assignment within the school. We modify our methods of delivery, look for new and exciting content to stimulate the minds of our kids, and of course, search for ways to stimulate our *own* interest in what we teach. (If we are not excited about the material, how can we expect our students to be?) Generally the interest is inherent in the subject matter that we deliver. It is what we chose at the University level to become expert with and what we feel best about sharing. However, even the familiar can breed a little contempt. Like relationships, teaching requires frequent attention and complacency can spell disaster for us and our students. Ask yourself this question: "Have I ever found myself standing in a classroom, wondering why the words that I was speaking sounded so familiar?" And of course the follow-up question is: "Why would that be?"

The answer (or my version) is that we need to recharge, rejuvenate, refresh (and all of the other re's) our own understanding of the materials that we use to deliver understanding to our students. Andy Hargreaves talks about the use of reflexive thought in one's practice which is reflection, thinking, and meditation. It is critical that we frequently reflect upon our own practice and maintain a current viewpoint. As with all curriculum, things change, and where but with technology does that tend to happen more frequently and with such drastic modification? As the saying goes with weather in Newfoundland and Labrador, *don't blink!* Same with technology. And we, as technology educators, have an imperative to keep abreast of what those changes are in our field.

The last two years have witnessed the introduction of a number of new courses into the system: Grade 7/8 Production and Control Technology, the soon to be piloted Grade 9 Energy and Power module, the exciting Skilled Trades components, new sensing and control technologies in the IS1205 courses (Phidgets), all of which have introduced a completely new level of thinking for technology educators, and of course, a need for intensive professional development. The curriculum has changed and we need to as well! Your personal professional development plans that you implement at the beginning of each school year play a significant role in mapping out strategies to deal with that change. You define the need and the possible solution to that need.

And that is where the TESIC comes into play. Our mandate is to try and assist in providing some of the professional development required for you to stay in the loop. And we certainly have an exciting conference planned for you this fall in October in St. John's. The focus will be two pronged: skilled trades and technology, but there will *also* be something for other curriculum areas that have an interest in technology integration. Music educators, the arts, social sciences, technology, and others will see sessions designed to provide thrills, spills, and a new level of excitement for your teaching.

Each session has been carefully planned and coordinated to present you with items of interest, new ideas, and information to carry back to your classroom. We have the engaging and entertaining Jon Eakes booked for the keynote on Thursday evening. You won't want to miss that one! Jon, as many of you know, is the host of the HGTV show entitled *Just Ask Jon Eakes*. Jon was a pioneer in television, starring in the first national home renovation TV show in North America. We are *very* excited to have him on board and know that he will give an insightful session for everyone!

Our hope is that at the end of the two days you will begin engaging in reflexive thought about your own practice. Howard Gardner gave sage advice when he stated, "The greatest enemy of understanding is coverage… You've got to take enough time to get kids deeply involved in something so they can think about it in lots of different ways and apply it." Deep engagement requires a fresh perspective on our part, one that can be obtained through active participation in relevant professional development activities. Our wish is to provide that relevance and excitement for your teaching that will, hopefully, carry you through to the end of the school year!

Jon Eakes (picture courtesy of HGTV)

If you have any questions regarding registration, please do not hesitate to email me at enippard@cdli.ca or eric.nippard@nf.sympatico.ca or eric.nippard@wnlsd.ca; Joe Lafitte at josephlafitte@esdnl.ca; Ed Foley at edwardfoley@esdnl.ca; Tony Hillier at tonyhillier@esdnl.ca or tonyhillier@gov.nl.ca; or Bruce King at bking@cdli.ca; either of which will get an immediate reply.

You can register by visiting our site at www.cc.k12.nf.ca/tesic/. The conference will be held at the Battery Hotel in St. John's on October 18 and 19, 2007. Fees are $50 which are payable by cheque or cash and may be sent to (TESIC c/o Ed Foley, Box 62, Goulds, NL, A1S 1G3) or you may pay at the conference site. The $50 includes the TESIC membership ($15) for one year, your conference fees, and the BGM luncheon meal on Friday.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Eric Nippard is President of the Technology Education Special Interest Council.

Well... Well... Wellness!

by KELLIE BAKER

What is said to be the very first man-made epidemic in the world? If you guessed obesity, you are correct. *The Weight of the World* (an NFB/CBC - *The Nature of Things with David Suzuki* co-production) brings the obesity epidemic to stark light. Obesity is a world wide problem that has even reached into third world countries!

Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) has not been spared from this epidemic. Our province has the highest obesity rate of women (35%) and men (33%) in Canada according to the 2004 Canadian Community Health Service Survey. This trend is growing with overweight/obesity rates of those ages 2 to 17 years being 36% in NL, 10% above the national average. Obesity rates alone for this age group are more than double (17%) the national average (8%), (*Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids, Report of the Standing Committee on Health*). This is one of those cases when it's not celebrated, honoured or revered to be first.

So, what is NL doing about this? In late 2005 a partnership between Government Departments, Health and Education enabled five new positions to be brought to life across the province. The School Health Promotion Liaison Consultants' mandate is to work toward the promotion of all aspects of health and wellness for K-12 students.

Last year at Macpherson Elementary in St. John's we formed a Wellness Committee based upon the fact that students of NL identified the need for more consistent Active and Healthy Living activities to truly embrace the ideology trying to be conveyed. It is also in response to our school population which is predominantly lower socioeconomic status and if they do not receive such opportunities to participate in Active and Healthy Living activities at school then they may not get the opportunity at all.

What exactly does our Wellness Committee do? We hold monthly activities which promote Active, Healthy Living through physical activity, promotion of healthy eating, participation in hands-on activities, and community involvement. We believe it is essential to foster the knowledge that Active, Healthy Living extends beyond the school walls. Here's a healthy taste of what we did last school year:

September – kick-off to the province's Healthy Living Commotion. Each grade level produced a poster depicting components of fitness which they then presented at an assembly attended by parents, School Board and Department of Education representatives. For the remainder of the year they were displayed on the gym and referenced during Physical Education classes. After recess there was a Nutrition Treasure Hunt. Smiles on faces and full bellies too were truly the treasure! At lunchtime the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) brought their horse unit to lead us on our Terry Fox Walk. When we returned to the school we stayed on the field to skip, use hoola hoops, play soccer and generally do what kids do – have fun playing.

Former Macpherson Elementary principal Craig Trenblett joins students in skipping.

October – Walk to School week when students and staff are encouraged to walk to school all month. As an added incentive, one week we awarded the Golden Sneaker (an old spray painted sneaker) to the primary and elementary class with the highest percentage of daily walkers.

November – Fruit Day encouraged students to bring (and eat) fruit on Wednesday of each week for a ticket to be entered into a draw for a free Physical Education class.

December was a time to get active with Jingle Bell Aerobics. Once a week students would tie Jingle Bells to their sneakers and participate in aerobics on Friday afternoon in the gym.

January – Every home room was encouraged to find 7-20 minute slots during the month to follow the ready-to-use lesson plans provided by the RBC Olympics website promoting student activity by simulating Olympic events in their classroom.

February – "Fun and Frolic" put the fun back into winter when all classes went out onto the field to participate in activities such as sliding, snow soccer and building snow sculptures. The highlight came on the last day when cookies and hot chocolate were enjoyed by all.

Macpherson Elementary students enjoy hula hooping.

March – Fruit Day was such a big hit we decided to do it again in March and link it with St. Patrick's Day so that any student eating green fruit would be given two tickets for the draw. This also promoted searching for green fruit at the grocery store as well as classroom discussion on the large variety of green fruit available. Thankfully, such teachable moments are the result of no planning at all.

April – Spirit Week had student vs. student soccer games, student vs. teacher team handball games, Sky High Amusements inflatable jumping tigers and castles and mazes. It all culminates in our Lip Sync'/dance groups which have students practicing every recess and sometimes lunch hour leading up the performance.

May – the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD) SpecTAGular. Each year Canadian schools can register to be part of a national event which promotes healthy living through playing tag. Students find it "cool" to be playing tag at the same time, on the same day, as thousands of other school children across Canada.

June is a chance to introduce students to a variety of schoolyard games such as 500's, wall ball, skipping, square ball and other games which somehow have gotten lost since I was young. It made my "teacher heart" happy to see some of our students playing these games over the summer. Not only were they active, but they were active even given the obstacle of having no backyard or playground within walking distance. The school year and the Wellness Committee culminated into one day on the field that we call Fun Day. And again it was fun to watch all the students participating cooperatively in games, competitions and free play just for the fun of it!

Wellness Committees are a fun way to get everyone in the school involved in Active, Healthy Living while also learning through doing. The committee actually reduces the labour of the Physical Education specialist or other person who may decide to take on such initiatives. Getting others involved in the committee also allows these teachers to move onto other schools taking this experience with them with the ability to start committees at their new school. So, get on board and dive in! Start a Wellness Committee and share your monthly ideas with others. Let's start the second ever man-made epidemic by spreading Active, Healthy Living.

Kellie Baker is a Physical Education Teacher at Macpherson Elementary in St. John's.

A Financial Update (after the summer)

by PAT HOGAN

1. Investing

What has happened? During the past summer, a number of significant financial events have occurred that impact all of us. The stock markets have seen a correction that has had the effect of reducing the market value of some of our investments – including Registered Retirement Savings Plans. As well, the Bank of Canada has decided to raise interest rates in an effort to contain inflation. The effect of this has been an increase in loan and mortgage rates and a decrease in the value of the bond holdings in our investment accounts.

What needs to be done? After you receive your September quarterly investment account statements (by mid-October), visit your financial advisor to discuss your investments. Review your "investor profile" to see if it still reflects your goals, time horizon, personal or family circumstances, risk tolerance, etc. Does your account now need to be "re-balanced" so that the asset allocation matches your investor profile? Ask your advisor to explain how each component of your portfolio (cash, bonds, Canadian equities, foreign equities and specialty funds) all fit together to achieve your personal investing goals.

2. Debt Reduction

What has happened? The recent rise in the prime interest rate to 6.25% suggests the possibility of a trend towards rising interest rates for personal loans and mortgages.

What needs to be done? If your mortgage is due for renewal, shop around. While banks and credit unions traditionally supply mortgage funds, some insurance companies also offer competitive rates on mortgages. Ask your insurance or investment representative.

Another strategy to reduce debt (and the cost of supporting it) is to reduce your credit card use to one "low interest" card only. Eliminate the "high-interest" credit cards completely. Pay down the balance due in full each month, if you can.

Inquire about a "home equity line of credit" at prime (6.25%) as a low-cost source for borrowing money.

3. Financial/Estate Planning

What has happened? If your personal or family situation has changed over the recent past, e.g. a new job, a marriage, a new baby, a divorce, a new home, etc., then your financial security plans may need re-examination to reflect these changes. Each of these major life changes can impact the appropriateness of your investments, your insurance coverage, your estate plan, and your tax position among other things.

What needs to be done? One simple solution is to consult with your lawyer to prepare or update your will. The benefits of having a will far outweigh the costs, delays, and inconvenience of dying intestate. Another suggestion is to update your "Know your Client" information with your financial advisor.

4. Insurance (or financial risk management)

What has happened? As you get older and pass through different stages in your career, your insurance needs change. (e.g. as your mortgage declines and your children leave home, your life insurance needs change.)

What needs to be done? From time to time, it is wise to review the type, amount and deductibles for each insurance policy you may have. Ask yourself: Is my coverage still suitable? Is my coverage still adequate? Are there cost-saving alternatives worth my consideration?

Note: If you are a teacher in the mid to late stages of your career, read my article *Three Stages of Life Insurance*. You will find it archived on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca) under "Publications"/The Bulletin/ June, 2005 issue/link on page 6.

5. Taxes

What has happened? In 2006, a lot changed.

- Effective in 2006, a big change for students – now there is a full exemption of scholarship and bursary income from taxes. This measure will apply to more than 100,000 post-secondary students.
- In addition (for students), a textbook tax credit for full-time and part-time students came into effect.

• As well, there are many other changes especially in the "non-refundable tax credits" area that were new in 2006.

In 2007, tax laws are changing again!

• Some major changes in RESPs (Registered Education Savings Plans) that increase annual and lifetime contribution limits, increase CESG (Canada Education Savings Grants) amounts, etc.

• For families, a new Child Tax Credit is planned for each child under age 18.

• For seniors, there are two significant changes: 1) Raising the age of mandatory RRSP conversion from 69 to 71. At the same time, the RRSP rules were changed to allow contributions to an RRSP to continue to age 71. 2) A proposal to allow "income-splitting" for pension income. This will allow pensioners to allocate to their resident spouse or partner up to one-half of their pension income.

• Federal Budget 2007 also contained proposals to create a new RDSP (Registered Disability Savings Plan) coupled with a Canada Disability Savings Grant program which would be structured along the lines of the RESP and CESG. This is expected to be available in 2008.

What needs to be done? These yearly changes mean that you have to keep up-to-date to take full advantage. I would recommend using a tax professional or an approved tax software program. It is also highly recommended that spouses do their tax returns together; in this way, certain credits can be transferred from one to the other for better tax savings.

Medical Expense Tax Credit: Are you aware of the "medical expense tax credit"? It is true that our Newfoundland MCP covers many of our medical expenses – doctor visits, specialist consults, hospital stays and treatments, etc. But we also incur "out-of-pocket expenses" that can be claimed if your medical and dental expenses exceed a specific amount based on your net income. Some qualifying expenses, among a long list, include: 1) private health insurance plan premiums; 2) dental insurance plan premiums; 3) orthodontic expenses; 4) any out-of-pocket costs that were not reimbursed by your health or dental insurance plans; 5) eyeglasses; 6) physiotherapy services; 7) chiropractic treatments; 8) prescription expenses (your pharmacy will gladly provide a computer printout for all your prescriptions for 2007 next January). Even holiday travel health insurance plan premiums can be included.

Patients having to travel more than 40 kilometres from home to receive medical treatment may claim travel expenses as a medical claim; others, who must travel more than 80 kilometres, may claim accommodation and meal expenses, in addition to travel expenses as a medical claim. (see CRA Tax Guide 2006, pp. 42-43)

If you are a parent, you can claim medical expenses for yourself, your spouse and your child aged 17 or younger on line 330 of Schedule 1.

In addition, you can claim for a child over 18 who is "dependent" (i.e. a person who, at some time in the year, was dependant on you for support.) These are claimed on line 331 of Schedule 1 on the parent's tax return.

It would be unfortunate not to claim these medical expenses and miss both the federal and provincial tax credit relief available.

This information (current as of September 1, 2007) is general in nature, and intended for educational purposes; always consult the appropriate professional in specific situations.

Pat Hogan is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and an investment representative with Quadrus Investment Services, Ltd. and The Great-West Life Assurance Company. He would welcome inquiries, without obligation, at hogan @nl.rogers.com or 709-754-0413.

Necessity, the Mother of Ingenuity

by GEORGE TUCKER

If you visited Mount Pearl Intermediate School and took a tour of the learning resource centre, I am confident you would be very impressed with the spacious, well-stocked facility. Like other schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, numerous books, magazines and other resources are on display. Reading is integral to the future success of all students, but as we all know there are many competing forces that are vying for the attention and time of our young people. For many students, books play second fiddle to video games, TV, cell phones, I-Pods, etc. Consequently, finding creative ways to engage students in reading good books and magazines in a world bombarded by technology is a high priority for the staff at Mount Pearl Intermediate as it is in all schools. However, unlike other schools, the books and magazines at Mount Pearl Intermediate are displayed in a very unique, ingenious manner to appeal to the students. With a focus to attractively present the learning materials to catch the attention of some 950+ grade four to nine students while having to work with a limited budget, the Teacher Librarian, Ms. Dawn Butler, has developed partnerships with local companies to provide rain gutter book display units for classrooms, the resource centre and other areas of the school to display their books and other resources. The rain gutters are easily installed on any surface and are very cost effective. The approximate cost of one 10' section of rain gutter with two end pieces and four brackets is $30. Besides the economical advantage of using rain gutters in lieu of more traditional, more expensive display units, the rain gutters and accessories are available in a variety of colours which allows near unlimited matching to any décor or imagination. The rain gutters also boast the feature of flexibility of length as they can be cut to fit any size space.

Partnership opportunities are encouraged and marketed by Ms. Butler and her colleagues on the premise that the local businesses will realize several lucrative benefits by developing a partnership with Mount Pearl Intermediate. The benefits include:

- School/Community Connection – permanent contribution to school learning environment.
- Publicity and promotion through School Newsletter, School Report, *The Telegram* (Community Heroes) and NLTA's *The Bulletin*.
- In store publicity. (It provides an opportunity to display alternative uses for rain gutters in the sponsoring store.)
- Bragging Rights! Although this idea has been used in the United States, Mount Pearl Intermediate is one of the few schools to use it in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Bonus: Credit for participating in a unique and innovative way of creating a classroom reading environment.

Ms. Butler indicates that she got the idea for the rain gutter display units from an article written by Jim Trelease, international consultant and author of *The Read-Aloud Handbook* (2001). For years Jim has advocated that books need to be advertised in classrooms and libraries in the same fashion that cookies and cereal boxes are displayed in the grocery stores – with the cover facing out. Thus, he strongly advocates the idea of using rain gutters as a cost effective approach to displaying books in the classroom and other strategic areas of the school. Encouraging students to read is a major challenge for all teachers. Jim describes the challenge simply when he states…

We have all heard the cliché, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink." Many times, I have heard teachers refer to this adage to describe their frustrations as they struggle to motivate their students to spend more time reading and to assist them in the development of a reading habit. These comments are from teachers who are well acquainted with the reading research that supports that children get better at reading by reading.

Perhaps we can't "make" the horse drink, but we can do things, such as enhancing the reading environment, to increase the likelihood that students will develop a thirst for books and spend more time reading. One way to enhance the reading environment is by turning to the gutters — rain gutters, that is.

Our hats are off to Ms. Butler and the students and staff of Mount Pearl Intermediate for joining the rain gutter literacy revolution and for proving once gain that 'necessity is indeed the mother of invention'.

If you know of ingenious ideas that would benefit other schools, please forward your ideas/suggestions to *The Bulletin* Editor at mail@nlta.nl.ca and they will be considered for future publication.

George Tucker is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Earth Day Canada invites elementary school teachers and educators to check out their EcoKids English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) lesson plans, now available online at ecokids.ca. The lesson plans, formally evaluated by ESL professionals, are learner-centered, readily applicable and linked to Ontario's K-6 curriculum.

EcoKids, a free curriculum-linked environmental education program, has been promoting environmental awareness in fun and exciting ways to young Canadians for over 10 years.

To access the EcoKids ESL lesson plans, visit ecokids.ca. To learn more about Earth Day Canada, visit earthday.ca.

YOU'RE IN BUSINESS

You're IN Business is a new educational resource created by the Insurance Institute of Canada's Curriculum Connections program for Canadian Business Studies teachers and students. It delivers the real-world knowledge from the big business of insurance directly into the Business Studies classroom. Designed to be curriculum-ready, this comprehensive resource has application for intro to business, management (leadership), marketing, finance, entrepreneurship and business ethics.

Written for today's youth, *You're IN Business* provides lessons to address such important topics as: ethical issues in electronic communications; corporate responsibility and the use of Codes of Conduct; and character development of a model employer and a model employee.

You're IN Business contains seven lessons, each with three parts. Lessons are best used sequentially but may also work on their own, if one aspect of the program suits a curriculum need. Several lessons focus on the creation of a student insurance business and offer students an opportunity to model a real-world entrepreneurial venture in the classroom. Other lessons explore insurance tools that are designed to support real world business ventures such as risk management, business interruption insurance and business liability insurance.

Resources are available free of charge to Canadian teachers and can be ordered online at www.career-connections.info.

MY WORST BEST SLEEPOVER PARTY

My ~~Worst~~ Best Sleepover Party by authors Anna Morgan and Dr. Rachael Turkienicz, presents an accurate and realistic portrayal of relational aggression and bullying in an illustrated, easy-to-read chapter book that helps children deal with a pervasive schoolyard problem. Young readers will empathize and identify with Rose as she negotiates her way through the tangle of emotions she feels – confusion, loyalty, hurt feelings, peer pressure, isolation – and come away with practical strategies to cope with bullies.

Anna Morgan is an international journalist and columnist for *The Toronto Star* newspaper. Her first novel, *Daughters of the Ark*, was included on the Pennsylvania School Librarians' Top Ten List for historical fiction and her story, *Contagion*, was a 2003 National Magazine Award finalist.

Dr. Rachael Turkienicz is on faculty at York University in the Department of Education. She is a monthly columnist with *The Canadian Jewish News* and is a television producer and host. She helped co-found a multi-sensory arts-based school, and continues to consult with various education institutions.

My ~~Worst~~ Best Sleepover Party, ISBN 978-1-897187-20-3, $7.95, 122 p.

RESOURCES FOR SCIENCE LEARNING

The National Research Council Canada provides complimentary science learning resources to educators and students, appropriate for a variety of grade levels. This bilingual educational material is linked to Canadian curriculum in various areas of science and technology, including astronomy, chemistry, biology and Canadian innovation.

An online order form is available at www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/student-science-tech/order.html. Should you have any questions or require further information on projects of the National Research Council, contact education@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca.

FREE ONLINE PROJECT: STUDENTS TRACK SEASONS, ANIMAL MIGRATIONS, CLIMATE CHANGE

Teachers and students in K-12 classrooms are invited to participate this fall in Journey North's 15th annual global study of wildlife migration and seasonal change. One of the nation's premier Internet-based "citizen science" projects, Journey North enables students in 11,000 schools to track the seasons on a real-time basis. Students monitor migration patterns of monarch butterflies, bald eagles, whooping cranes, and other animals; the budding of plants, changing sunlight, temperature patterns, other natural events. They share their local observations with classmates across North America and analyze current and long-term data from other classroom and professional scientists. As they do so, participants are better prepared to recognize indicators of climate change and consider its implications.

Each Journey North study features many entry points and resources that address learning standards: *Journey North for Kids* reading booklets and lessons with stunning photos and video clips, weekly migration updates, interactive maps, connections with field scientists, and compelling migration "stories." The studies help students fit local observations and inquiries into a global context.

Thanks to a grant from Annenberg Media, Journey North web site access and participation is free. Visit the Journey North web site for details: www.learner.org/jnorth.

Calendar

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION SIC BGM

October 18-19, 2007

Battery Hotel & Suites, St. John's. Keynote: Jon Eakes, host of HGTV's *Just Ask John Eakes*. Register online at www.cc.k12.nf.ca/tesic/. For further information contact: Eric Nippard, 709-643-2703, enippard@cdli.ca or eric.nippard@nf.sympatico.ca; Joe Lafitte, josephlafitte@esdnl.ca; Ed Foley, edwardfoley@esdnl.ca; Tony Hillier, tonyhillier@esdnl.ca or tonyhillier@gov.nl.ca; or Bruce King, bking@cdli.ca.

NL COUNSELLORS' & PSYCHOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION SIC FALL CONFERENCE AND AGM

October 24-26, 2007

Battery Hotel & Suites, St. John's. Theme: *Building Respectful Workplaces and Learning Environments*. A block of rooms has been reserved for the conference; reserve your room by calling 1-800-563-8181. Full conference sessions and concurrent sessions will be offered. For further information contact any member of the NLCPA Executive at www.cdli.ca/nlcpa/executive.htm.

SCHOOLS THAT SHINE WITH CHARACTER 2007

November 5-6, 2007

Huntsville, Ontario. This National Character Education Conference (NCEC) is an opportunity to hear inspirational speakers, participate in terrific workshops and to share best practices. Keynote speakers include Stephen Lewis, Dr. Michele Borba, Micah Jacobson, Robin Sharma and Craig Kielburger. For further information or to register online visit www.ncec.ca.

BANFF NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2008: CREATING A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

February 20-22, 2008

Banff, Alberta. Canadian educational leaders are meeting again in Banff to hear, learn and share new ideas about leadership in education. You will have the opportunity to hear three published authors (Dr. Marcia Tate, Dr. James Stronge, Allison Zmuda) with international speaking, teaching and consulting experience. For more information and to register, go to www.creedseminars.com or call toll-free: 1-866-882-7333.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRACTICAL STUDY OF LAW IN EDUCATION (CAPSLE) ANNUAL CONFERENCE

April 20-22, 2008

Halifax, NS. Theme: *Educational Leadership Today and Tomorrow: The Law as Friend or Foe*. Further information: www.capsle.ca.

Dates to Remember

October 2007

Oct 11-12	Pre-Retirement Seminar, Gander
Oct 12-13	School Rep Seminars, Gander and St. John's
Oct 18	**Deadline:** Professional Development Fund Applications
Oct 18-19	Pre-Retirement Seminar, Stephenville
Oct 19-20	School Rep Seminar, Goose Bay
Oct 25-26	Pre-Retirement Seminar, Grand Falls-Windsor

November 2007

Nov 1	NLTA Executive Meeting
Nov 2-3	Joint Council Meeting
Nov 7	**Deadline:** Project Overseas Applications
Nov 7-8	Pre-Retirement Seminar, Corner Brook
Nov 15	**Department Deadline:** Teacher Exchange applications to Australia, Britain and USA
Nov 22-23	Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
Nov 29-30	Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's

"I like to try to get a head start on them."